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ABSTRACT

Major changes in the context in which education managers will be operating in the 1990s presents challenges for heads of schools, while at the same time providing opportunities for heads to function more powerfully at the school level. The dominant professional management models are discussed from a historical perspective; they include the Professional Model (pre-1965) and the Professional/Chief Executive Model (1963 to the present). After analyzing a number of models, this paper concludes by offering for debate a prescriptive model, with 12 key points, which takes the most valuable parts of the managerial and micropolitical models. The prescriptive model also draws upon studies of effective schools, the studies of managers in action, and the more general literature on "excellence." (48 references) (SI)

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EDUCATION MANAGERS - PARADIGMS LOST

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EDUCATION MANAGERS - PARADIGMS LOST

Introduction

"Show me a senior head and I will show you a man who can't wait to retire" an ex-head wrote recently in a local newspaper (Herbert 1988). The reasons given for this apparent disenchantment with the job of a head are to do with changes in the job which make it a much more difficult and far less attractive proposition than it used to be. It seems that new managerial and educational challenges are so daunting that heads are leaving in disillusionment. This disillusionment is based partly on present experience but particularly on fears of the future when the introduction of new government policies will involve heads in unfamiliar managerial tasks. "Who wants to be a head?" seems to be the refrain sung at the moment and a recent survey points to a high turnover of heads and difficulties in recruitment. A major pay rise for heads is needed, so we are told, to encourage more teachers to apply for headships (*The Times*, 23 January 1989).

Heads are faced with mounting pressures in managing their schools effectively as Government demands on education grow daily. The introduction of local management of schools with devolved financial powers and a new role for the governing body; the possibility of opting out; the bringing in of a national curriculum, pupil testing and new examinations; parental choice of schools; the creation of close links between school and industry; performance evaluation and teacher appraisal; all are manifest indicators of a formidable array of managerial tasks facing the head. Less obvious, however, but equally powerful, are the demands to raise standards in schools and to create in them, with the help of the Training Commission, a spirit of enterprise. All these demands, against the usual background of uncertainty about levels of finance, a growing shortage of teachers in key areas of the curriculum and low teacher morale, do appear overwhelming.

It might be worthwhile to rehearse some of the powerful political trends which underpin these changes. In the first place there has occurred what has been called "the industrialization of the school" (Apple, 1988). The crisis of poor economic performance seen not only in the UK but in other industrial countries like the USA and Australia has caused, over the last eight years, a radical transformation in the purpose of schools. In these countries, schools are no longer seen as part of some well meaning social alliance working for the common good. In numerous reports and government circulars, in all three countries (e.g. in the USA, 'A Nation at Risk' 1983) schools were reproached for their 'mediocrity' and their failure to meet the needs of the economy. Blame, both for the decline of the economy and the

break-up in traditional values and standards in the family, was shifted from economic and business policies to schools and other learning institutions. As a result of these pressures schools, it is argued, can no longer be as interested in redressing social and economic inequalities as in "providing the educational conditions believed necessary for both increasing profit and capital accumulation and returning us to a romanticized past of the 'ideal' home family and school" (Apple, 1988). If we accept this view of schools as vehicles of economic utility then other goals to do with social values and concern and political awareness become less important than making the purpose of schools integral to the needs of business and industry.

The second trend also reflects a belief in the values of industry and their transfer to education. This is the introduction into schools of the free market conditions of choice and competition. Schools will compete with one another to attract pupils and be under powerful and direct consumer control. This is a belief that "a system which is accountable and responsive to the choices of individual customers of the service will improve in quality as a necessary consequence" (Ransom, 1988). Quality will be guaranteed by placing the consumer and choice at the heart of the education system and the survival of schools will depend on their capacity to stick by their customers. Individuals should be free to place their custom where they wish and schools which do not attract custom will not survive. Choice, of course, will be widened by the possibility of opting out, by creating Grant Maintained Schools and by the introduction of City Technology Colleges.

Determining these trends is the present government's view of a new political order based on the rights of individuals. "The organising principles of the new order espouse the values of individual rights and choices" (Ransom, 1988) and it is believed that society gains by giving individuals the right to promote their self-interest. However, somewhat ironically, Central Government does need to intervene in this free market to create the right conditions for consumer control. The new common curriculum, the direct accountability of schools to the consumer by the decrease in power of the Local Education Authorities, the 'opting out' clause in the 1988 Education Act, are centralist interventions to 'create' the right market conditions for consumer choice and control.

What the government is saying in effect is that schools have failed within their existing administrative framework to provide education of the necessary relevance and quality. The traditional management arrangement of professional dominance in the schools and local political control at LEA level has been unsatisfactory in terms of the educational performance of schools. Schools, in this view, have been hijacked by a combination of professionals and politicians and taken away from the real source of control - that is, the consumer. The "stifling control of professional bureaucracies" (Ranson 1988) has resulted in low

standards, (hence the need for national testing), inappropriate learning (hence the attacks on child centred learning), irrelevant curriculum (not enough attention paid to core subjects and to key skills) and inadequate assessment of teacher performance (too much control by the professionals).

What education managers need to recognise fully is that what is now taking place is the practical implementation of a powerful political ideology; care must be taken not to underestimate its effect on the ways in which head teachers perceive their jobs or indeed the ethical dilemmas in which many heads are placed over issues such as the role of schools as nurturers of enterprising individuals or providers of broader social values.

For despite the ideological basis for change in Britain, there is still a tendency at school level to depoliticize educational change and to translate it into some sort of value-free technical process which ignores the philosophical basis of change. Education and management are based on social and political values (Watkins, 1986, Riffel, 1986). Indeed the changes which are being experienced in England and Wales are not cases of 'tinkering at the edges' but fundamental reforms about the way in which we pursue the purpose of schooling and its management. It has been argued, for example, that in the USA and Australia much of the marketplace reform is still at the level of 'rhetoric and symbol', while in the UK by the 1990s major structural reforms will have been implemented.

> "Thus Reagan, while working within the existing public school structure, has made relatively minor changes in American schools; Thatcher in contrast, has altered the very structure of British schools, leading to a kind of education revolution." (Cooper, 1988)

Even more remarkably, some Conservative MPs do not consider that the reforms have gone far enough and are requesting further reforms such as the scrapping of national pay scales and the introduction of 'plant level' settlements (TES, December 1988).

The introduction of the consumer-led economy will obviously present heads with radically different management challenges. Certainly, it has to be asked whether management and organisational models which previously have underpinned the behaviour of heads will now appear inadequate to heads as they face increasingly complex and difficult problems. Of course, there are as many opportunities as there are problems and heads, shaking off the constraints of the LEA, will be able to run their own show. Many heads are looking forward to the devolution of power, but headship is a very difficult job. Can management trainers help?

Paradigms: Past and Present

If the challenges of management are going to be radically different, what were past perspectives like and are they of any use for the future? A historical view of the ways heads have perceived their job since the post-war years could look something like this. The **dominant models** are:

pre-1965 - Professional Model.
1965 to the present - Professional/Chief Executive Model.
post-1990 ?

The professional model is well known. What lovely times pre-1965 must seem - at least to those looking back on them. Those were the days of professional autonomy, stable curriculum, a fairly safe external environment and a clear consensus, for the most part, about the social and educational purposes of school. Of course, those heads also had pressures and problems but life must have seemed straightforward compared with the complex issues facing heads today. The professional sway of the head went relatively unchallenged and his benevolent autocracy, a sort of severe but well-meant paternalism, as many who taught in schools in the 60s can readily testify, controlled teachers while giving them complete autonomy in the classroom. The head's behaviour was based on atheoretical approaches and there was little basis for that behaviour other than previous experience and a long tradition of professional values. Management within this model was seen as day to day administration consisting mostly of paper work or problem solving to do with pupils and staff. There was little acknowledgement of management and heads were clear that management was something alien which went on in industry. Heads were educationists, not managers. To present heads looking back, like the serpent peering into the Garden of Eden, it must have been Paradise.

However, even heads could not stay in that state or pristine innocence for long. The larger schools that developed with the introduction of Comprehensive Education, the loud cries for accountability that were raised in the 60s, the severe doubts that emerged about the effectiveness of the existing curriculum and of schools in general in the 70s, particularly in relation to the massive investment in them, contributed to a growing realisation that schools needed managing. It began to be understood that professionalism was too naive a concept to serve as a basis for managing the complexities of the changing schools - the sinfulness, as it were, of the real world, was upon heads.

Much of this period was an awakening to the demanding role of being a head. Borrowing heavily from the social sciences and general management

literature, schools were examined as bureaucracies and open systems and structures and roles within schools subjected to scrutiny. Leadership was put under the microscope as were ways of motivating staff and communicating with them. The tasks of management were rehearsed and heads were advised to give attention to goal setting, planning and even evaluation. Heads were asked to share power with their staff both to break down the autocracy of the head and to satisfy the needs of professionals who deserved a voice in how the school was run.

Things going wrong in organisations were treated as a 'deviation' or a 'sickness' which could be cured by the manager reasserting order and rationality. Although we were given insights into the structural looseness of schools (Weick, 1976) and even their anarchical tendencies (March and Olsen, 1976), there was a strong belief in schools as a social system characterised by "value consensus, solidarity, co-operation, integration and the acceptance of legitimate authority" (Hoyle, 1986, p.9). Management, according to Greenfield (1979), was still being placed within the broader concept of a **science** of administration.

The realisation, however, that the head as a professional held managerial and leadership responsibilities gave rise to the model of the head as the leading professional/chief executive. This model, conceptualised and developed by Hughes (1985) explores the deep interpretation of the two roles of professional and manager. Using the unifying term 'professional leadership' Hughes examines the three key areas of professional leadership - task achievement, group maintenance and development and the external representative role - and shows the interplay of professional/managerial skills, knowledge and attitudes. This, to the writer's mind, is the model which has dominated much of the thinking about heads as managers and of the way in which heads have seen their world for the last twenty years or so. The accommodation by the professional of the managerial role, finding out how professionals should behave as managers and making sense of schools as organisations have been the tasks.

This was, nevertheless, a conceptual framework which suggested high level skills in both sub-roles. How was this model fulfilled in real life? A number of attempts have been made in recent years to investigate what senior staff in schools actually do and these studies tend to show great variation in the way in which heads fulfil the model.

In a study the writer carried out a few years ago, which was a comparison of the ways in which heads and managers in manufacturing industry perceive their jobs, the role of chief executive in schools appeared far less developed than in manufacturing industry. Firstly, the strategic long term planning role which was a key component of the jobs of chief executives in industry did not appear to be of

great significance to heads. This lack of attention to forward planning was confirmed by a later study (Hall, Mackay and Morgan, 1986):

> "Unlike other managers, few of the headteachers that Jenkins (1983) or we studied had regular scheduled meetings or timetabled extended blocks of time to study specific policy issues. In other words, they had created few opportunities to think out and develop strategies and instruments to meet the complexity of demands on them for the development of school educational policy and classroom practice."

Heads taught and spent considerable time sorting out pupil problems, rather than spending time on creating overall strategies or giving a sense of direction to the school.

Secondly, although we know that managers in all types of organisations have a hectic work pattern, moving rapidly from one activity to another with constant interruptions to and fragmentation of their work, heads are particularly drawn to short term immediate problem solving and to day to day administrative/maintenance tasks. In the manufacturing industry many of these 'organisational maintenance' tasks (Stewart, 1976) were performed by middle managers.

Thirdly, the view that power sharing between heads and staff is now the norm in schools seems highly idealistic in some cases. Two of the four heads studied in depth devolved power in a very limited way (Hall, Mackay and Morgan, 1986) - and in a recent report researchers stated that:

> "they were baffled by the universal, unshakeable conviction among everyone we have spoken to about the power of the headteacher, who has organisational dominance to a degree almost unknown in our experience of studying management in a wide range of undertakings" (Quoted in *The Independent* , 22 October 1988).

Fourthly, heads, in the same way as managers in other industries, like face to face contact and dealing with people - the sort of head described as a 'pastoral missioner' (Hall, Mackay, Morgan, 1986). These interpersonal skills can be very valuable, operating mainly in the counselling and personal problem-solving areas. However, these skills were not carried over into a professional development for staff involving classroom supervision, appraisal and staff development. There was also a reluctance by heads to engage in the 'technical' processes such as curriculum

review and evaluation of performance; and finally, they much preferred stability and continuity to innovation and risk taking.

There is considerable evidence, then, to show that heads were locked into the leading professional/chief executive model but at very different levels of understanding and implementation and that the professional leadership role was interpreted in a limited way by some heads. To confuse the picture even further, however, more mines were discovered in the organisational minefield in the late 70s. While heads were trying to come to terms with managing more complex organisations, our view of organisations and their management was challenged by Greenfield and others. We were reminded of an alternative view of organisations (a source of long dispute in the social sciences but apparently new to educational administrators), namely, that organisations are invented social reality and that there is "no single abstraction called organisation but rather the varied perception of what they can, should or must do in dealing with matters within the circumstances in which they find themselves" (Greenfield, 1975). Organisations can only be understood through the actions of people within the organisation and:

> "the phenomenological view begins with the individual and seeks to understand his interpretation of the world around him."

The metaphors of order, system and control are not so applicable to our understanding of organisations as "will, intention, experience and value" (Greenfield, 1978). We are also reminded that we have underestimated the part that values play in a manager's view of the world and his actions. Conflict is inevitable in organisations because each individual operates on the basis of a personal value system which is often in opposition to other people's values. Because of the importance of values, there are also ethical and moral considerations for the manager. The manager should ask himself, "How can I be moral? What are the ethical issues involved in my actions?" In brief, organisations should not be seen in terms of stability, rationality and order but in terms of conflict brought about by different perceptions and different values of the individual actors within the organisation.

These approaches highlighted the complexities of the management of organisations and revealed limitations in the rationalistic approaches upon which much management theory and practice was based.

Alternative Paradigms

Are there alternative paradigms for the head to consider? Two models appear to be competing for the head's attention. These models of management reflect the continuing contest between interpretive and positivist views of

organisations, in turn reflected in the management view of organisations as conflict ridden and organisations as controllable. The first model is strongly promoted in much of the recent literature written about schools and organisations; the second model mirrors a strong ideological view of what managers ought to be doing to create efficient and economic organisations.

(a) The Micro-Political Model

> "The future of organisational analysis of schools lies in an understanding of the micro-politics of school life." (Ball, 1987 p. 7)

Micro-politics reflects the view that management - particularly the decision-making and resource allocation aspects of management - is not the result of rational analysis but of power bargaining and contests for control and influence within the school. Micro-politics describes "the strategies by which individuals seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests" (Hoyle, 1982 p. 88). The key issues, particularly as defined by Bacharach and Lawler (1980) are that organisations are bargaining arenas with the participants attempting to resolve conflict and at the same time promote their own interests through coalition seeking and negotiation.

A key concept, then, in the micro-political view is that of power. In micro-politics we aim to extend our power base and have power over other people. All social organisations have conflict and power struggles based on different values of the organisational members and we can all recognise that we are in a constant process of exchange, reciprocity and negotiation with one another.

It is not difficult to see the increased politicisation involved in the changing role of the head. The head will now be at the centre of groups competing for control and he will be both attempting to resolve conflict and at the same time, consolidating his own power base. He will have to cope with the competing demands of consumers who will themselves represent different power groups - parents, industrialists, politicians, teaching staff. There is little wonder that the Chief Executive Officer felt able to wish the head luck as he waved goodbye to some of his own problems which were now landing on the head's desk (Brighouse, 1988). Given this micro-political view of schools and the politicised role the head now has to play, should he become skilled in the strategies and ploys of micro-politics? The head, according to Ball (1987), is the major focus of micro-political activity in the school and is faced with the twin problems of domination and integration. It therefore has been argued that there is a need to teach heads the conceptual and practical skills necessary for surviving the politics of organisations and considerable attention is already paid in our training programmes to negotiation,

bargaining, coalition building, conflict handling, running meetings. It is a model that recognises that conflict is normal in organisations and that the conflict is resolved through negotiation and bargaining. Viewed like this it is for managers a comforting model, a reasonable way of creating order. But there is a less pleasant side of the model - which has been called the 'darker side' of organisational life, (Hoyle, 1982) implying that the exercise of power is not always benign. As noted earlier, Greenfield argues that educational organisations present a plurality of values; but he goes on to say that to get their way in this context, heads can be expected to engage in "persuasion, calculations, guile, persistence, threat or sheer force". Now, perhaps, the organisations as people know them become more recognisable and the following understatement must be admired:

> "political action in educational organisations will at times violate formal and informal normative expectations" (Blase 1988).

Using, too, we are told, 'non sanctioned means'. This means in straightforward language that there is a danger that leaders will use any means, fair or foul, to control and dominate the organisation. Everard (1986) comments that he has found in education more examples of inhuman and downright incompetent management than in industry.

In attempting to analyse micro-political tactics it has to be asked:

> In which way does coalition forming differ from ganging up?
>
> How does enlisting support from one person differ from playing off one member of staff against another?
>
> What has withholding information or deliberately giving misleading information to do with staff involvement?
>
> What has rigging meetings or fixing agendas to do with open discussion?
>
> Why do we pass on rumours about people?
>
> Why do we stab people in the back?

A quotation from a deputy head about a head sums up the divide and rule aspects of micro-politics:

> "I find he's two-faced. He says one thing to one person and then tells a different story to another. He's done this to me and Bill ... trying to split us up, etc." (Ball,1987, p. 154).

A recent study in the USA on micro-politics in schools enquires into how teachers perceive micro-politics in schools (Blase, 1988). More than a third of teachers identified favouritism as a major political phenomenon. By this they meant that heads used power unfairly to maintain control and domination in the schools. The micro-political practice of favouritism was employed in a number of areas:

1. Interviews for jobs were held when decisions had already been made as to who was to get the job.

2. Selected individuals were picked out for consultation and delegation of authority.

3. Certain teachers were given more freedom than others within the rules of the school.

4. Resources were allocated more generously to favoured teachers (including 'little favours' like access to the office telephone).

5. Favoured teachers were given greater recognition - both formal and informal recognition - picked out for praise.

The way these heads were exercising power was to engage in contracts with these teachers to get them on their side. Obligations were created in order to induce loyalty and gain support. How did teachers view this micro-political behaviour?

The micro-politics engendered states of anger, depression and anxiety. For example 64% of the teachers interviewed expressed anger at the actions of the principal - adjectives used frequently to describe their feelings were 'angry', 'resentful', 'disgusted', 'frustrated'. Fourteen percent of teachers were depressed, using words such as 'powerless', 'helpless' and:

> "The formation of cliques and cabals had a negative influence on teacher participation and micro-political approaches violated teachers' expectations about professional autonomy and status." (Blase, 1988).

On the other hand, this interpretation of micro-politics has been criticised as too narrow; micro-political behaviour need not be all about self-interest and getting your own way by fair means or foul (Jones, 1988). There is, it is suggested,

competitive and manipulative behaviour in organisations leading to winners and losers but this type of behaviour is not inevitable. High levels of warmth, loyalty, trust and openness are possible in organisations and manipulative behaviour will in the end be self-defeating. Micro-politics is a reflection of people bringing their different values and perceptions to the workplace and the assumption that politics can be a struggle of reasonable people to get what they consider might be acceptable in the organisation. Micro-political analysis sensitises people to power and the use and abuse of power. Micro-political behaviour is about negotiating around differences, creating tolerance and respect and being sensitive to other people's needs.

The need for the head in the 1990s to negotiate his way through conflicting demands from consumers and the external environment and from school staff and the internal environment will be paramount. The 'good' model of micro-politics could be the key to managerial success if the temptation to be manipulative and Machiavellian can be avoided. The problem is that writers about micro-politics take too anodyne and optimistic a view, treating micro-political approaches as if they were not potentially destructive of the organisation. It might be more encouraging if one did not read things like: "Try to be honest with others - in most cases they reciprocate"; or "How to be a modern Machiavelli".

(b) Managerial Model

The basic model has been around for a long time - from the beginning of the century and F.W. Taylor. The model of neo-Taylorism or the industrialised model, as it is commonly called, stresses increased productivity and reduced costs through the more effective use of resources. Its preoccupations are with a precise statement of objectives, performance measurement;,individual appraisal, tight financial control and the creation of a corporate image to ensure the organisation's market share (Spencer, 1969). The need to control costs and output will in turn lead to tighter supervision of the professional work force, while pleasing the consumer will have high priority. The vocabulary of the head will include action plans, targets, programme implementation and incentive schemes, as the language of industry begins to permeate schools.

In the model one can see the head exerting increased centralist control, seeing himself in the mould of the tough, uncompromising industrial manager. As financial control is increasingly delegated to schools and in case budgets get overspent and targets are not met, heads will want to take on more responsibilities themselves. To ensure that the school survives in a competitive age, more control and less freedom is called for, with schools adopting traditional industrial models, thus allowing less autonomy for the teachers while increasing the emphasis on control and status. Process will be more important than people and the head will

assume a "macho", Rambo-like style in an attempt to hold sway over staff and the consumer public. In case it is considered that this is an exaggeration, some very recent research on schools shows that the professional culture of participation and co-operation is being eroded by managerial-like approaches.

British Industry	**British Schools**
In the Past	***In the Past***
'factory' tradition	'community' tradition
management v workers	a unified ethos
'them and us' conflict	relative consensus
alienated, instrumental attitudes among workers	most staff committed above and beyond the minimum
therefore tight controls	great degree of autonomy
Recent Trends	***Recent Trends***
successful companies trying to get away from factory tradition by:	problems created by increased school size, rapid pace of change, re organisation, bizarre salary structures, low pay/union action
- less emphasis on STATUS - developing more AUTONOMY - relaxing unnecessary CONTROLS - creating flatter HIERARCHIES - fostering a unified CULTURE	- more emphasis on STATUS - erosion of AUTONOMY - imposition of CONTROLS - steep HIERARCHIES - MANAGEMENT IDEAS* * Often inappropriate or out-of-date ones from the 'factory' tradition.

(Weightman, 1988)

So while industry is stressing the autonomy of workers, reducing status differences between managers and workers and enhancing consultation and co-operation, schools are tending to do the opposite because industrial management is

perceived (not out of experience, in many cases) as a narrow form of Taylorism concerned with measurement and control.

The most controversial aspect of the managerial model may be that teachers could be reduced to units of production turning out the standardised product of the core curriculum. As the product becomes rationalised and unitised, the skills that teachers have developed of "setting curriculum goals, establishing content, designing lessons ... individualising instruction ..." are lost (Apple, 1988). This amounts to a deskilling of teachers which, if augmented by economic management, dedicated to efficient production, will also mean a disempowering of teachers.

The managerial ideology is a very persuasive one which has taken a grip on government thinking about the public sector. Managerialism has seduced the Civil Service, Health Service and Education, (see the Audit Commission). When Mrs Thatcher states that: "We need to lay down what it is children are expected to be taught in school and more than that, we need to know whether they are learning it", it has an immediate appeal to monopolistic and mechanistic leadership. It must also be said that the techniques of managerialism are being employed to implement powerful political beliefs, yet the nature of the techniques almost implies a value-free scientific approach to management. However, despite these difficulties with the model, it does have something to offer and, in terms of giving direction to the organisation, quality control and corporate identify, as the research report mentioned above reveals, seems to appeal to heads. It is certainly in tune with the political philosophy of the times. An analysis by Getzels (1977) describes some of the pillars of Taylorism: the work success ethic when the values of material achievement took precedence over values of human beings; competitive industrialism which epitomized the maxim 'the race is to the swift' and stated that the primary responsibility was to oneself rather than to any collectivity; puritan morality marking respectability, thrift, self-restraint and cleanliness as the signs of common decency and sloth a sin second only to idolatry.

Critique of the Micro-political and Managerial Models

Both the micro-political and managerial models have weaknesses. The micro-political model appears to imply an increase in the intensity of micro-political activities in order to arrive at some sort of agreed values, common understandings or corporate culture which will give direction to the school. The managerial model encompasses the imposition of consensus through increased control and measurement of performance. The reality is that both models are directed at maintaining power at the level of senior staff. In the managerial approach the desire for and maintenance of power is more obvious but even corporate culture can be politically manipulated (Bates, 1987) and evidence shows the micro-political model to be equally based on the aggregation of power. Here the negotiation element is

continuously usurped by the will to get one's own way on the part of the head. These top down, control models, keeping power at the top, are alien to many of the professional values held in schools and take us some way from the vision of the leading professional/chief executive model. The managerial model, for example, could in its most extreme form lead to a splitting of the management function from the professional. The implication of the managerial approach is that management is similar in all organisations and schools can be managed by anyone with management skills and knowledge - while academic leadership would be carried out by the professional (Handy, 1984). Both models tend to devalue professionalism and are alien to the values of a professional group. What is perhaps worse is that the models are based on beliefs and practices which many industrial companies are rapidly rejecting. Schools are apparently running counter to what is passing as management gospel these days. (Reid et al, 1987).

Searching for Models

One difficulty in finding a model is that we do not know enough about managers and their behaviour in schools. There are far too few studies of senior staff in action in schools and we have tended to ignore the 'more elusive idiographic and inspirational aspects of the role' (Houle, 1986, p. 102). The Polytechnic of Wales in its research work in education management has been trying to correct our failure to understand the important ways in which a person (i) defines situations, (ii) becomes aware of alternative courses of action, (iii) evaluates the consequences of action and (iv) considers these implications for his own social world (Eden et al, 1979). One method which has been developed is the use of a technique called 'Repertory Grid' based on Kelly's Personal Construct Theory which allows managers to construct their managerial world through their own interpretation and so build up a picture of the many ways in which individual managers perceive their jobs. The approach is strongly ideographic and interpretative. In putting forward his theory, Kelly believed that man invents for himself 'a representational model of the world which allows him to make sense out of it and enables him to chart a course of behaviour in relation to it.' (Bannister and Mair, 1968, p.6).

Kelly's concern is with the ways individuals choose to anticipate events and how 'each person characteristically evokes for his convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs'. Each person has a personal contract system or 'personally leaned interpretations' (Mair, 1970, p. 161) which he uses as a way of categorising similarities and differences which he perceives in an environment. Personal construct theory is a set of rules for making behaviour intelligible and Kelly asserts that the explanation of human behaviour incorporates 'scanning man's undertaking, the questions man asks, the lines of enquiry he instigates and the strategies he employs' (Kelly, 1969, p. 16). The Repertory Grid technique is a method of eliciting constructs and

assessing the mathematical relationships between them. It also allows comparisons across grids. It is a way of bringing to the surface people's perceptions, attitudes or concepts uncontaminated by the researcher.

The second problem in looking for an alternative model is that not enough is known about the relationship between the behaviour of managers and effectiveness in schools; in recent studies of secondary school effectiveness 'the leadership or management style of head teachers is seriously neglected' (Reynolds, 1988). In other research findings the importance of several key leadership qualities is emphasised. These include among others: positive or purposeful leadership, instructional leadership, vision and setting high professional standards. But what sort of behaviour by heads in what sort of situation brings about effective schools is not analysed in any depth. We need to know more about which actions are useful and constructive, which are not so useful or constructive. What actions are effective, ineffective, what are good or bad? There seems a strong case for focusing in the immediate future on the effectiveness of senior staff in leading schools (Hughes, 1988).

In the Polytechnic we are making some attempt to overcome these deficiencies in the design of our Master's programme. In this programme, teachers are acting as researchers inside their own institution, helping other managers (and themselves, of course) to reflect on their actions and to develop judgements about the soundness of those actions, thus encouraging a deeper analysis of practice. This form of action research can help us interpret the understandings and intentions of those exercising power within the organisation:

> "In the action research process, reflection and action are held in dialectal tension, each informing the other through a process of planned change, monitoring, reflection and modification." (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p.198).

This deliberate involvement of practitioners in analysing and changing practice within their own organisation:

> "involves practitioners directly in theorizing their own practice and revising their theories self critically in the light of their practical consequences." (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 198).

What must be ensured is that when the researchers unearth their accounts, their 'living experiences', of the effects and limitations of action, this evidence is presented to a wider world through publication and dissemination.

The Way Forward

Few action studies, then, have been carried out in schools from a position of analysing managerial power and managerial intention through action and this failure has not helped to clarify the state of confusion about managerial attitudes in schools. One other major reason is discernable as to why academics in the field of education management have failed to come up with the view of schools as 'managed organisations' - this is the considerable fear of offering over-simplified and over-generalised prescriptions to managers. Acutely aware of the complexities of issues within organisations, we favour a multi-paradigm approach, throwing light into the darkness by a series of small torches rather than by one powerful beam. How is it, we wonder, that management experts outside education have come up with concepts which can act as a guidance for managerial behaviour? A number of studies, including those in the 'excellence' series (Peters and Waterman, 1982, Peters, 1988, Grinyer et al, 1988, Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, 1984) come up with clear views of what managers should do to create effective organisations. Indeed, Tom Peters' latest book in the series, entitled *Thriving on Chaos* (Peters, 1988), is subtitled 'A handbook for a management revolution'. In this book Peters is not afraid to tell managers what to do and 45 prescriptions specify what managers at every level ought to do. He even has the temerity to suggest that his prescriptions could be the basis for a new theory of management. We have to admit, too, that the message of 'excellence' from the earlier books was so beguiling that many sought ways in which schools could be managed to fit these concepts (Handy, 1984).

One sometimes has a sinking feeling that while education managers have indulged in increasingly esoteric debates about the nature of organisations, others from detailed studies of 'real' organisations and managers can now come and tell us what to do and how to do it. After all, what Peters and others claim to have done is investigate companies, find out why some were excellent and tell us what managers did to achieve excellence. Deceptively simple but effective, if the response to Peters' work from practising managers is anything to go by.

The question now has to be asked: "Why has it not been possible to build management theory for schools based on effective practice?" Many schools are managed effectively; better, in some cases, than industrial companies. Even if it is done somewhat imperfectly can a managerial model be built for schools which is not naive, over-simplistic and over-generalised but is identifiable and meaningful? As stated above, more studies of effective schools in action are needed if these questions are to be answered satisfactorily; meanwhile, as a topic for debate, it is proposed to put together some key managerial prescriptions for schools. It is an eclectic model of 12 key prescriptions taking, in effect, the most valuable parts of

the LP/CE, managerial and micro-political models. The prescriptive model also draws upon studies of effective schools (e.g. Rutter, 1979 and Mortimore, 1988), the studies of managers in action (e.g. Jenkins, 1985, Hall et. al, 1986), and the more general literature on 'excellence' (Peters 1982, etc.). Because of the fragmentary nature of the research, the prescriptions inevitably reveal a degree of personal choice and analysis but it is believed that there are sufficient indicators in the available research on education management to guide heads and senior staff in the ways they could create effective schools. As a source of debate a model with 12 key prescriptions is offered for the head in the 1990s.

A Model for Schools - 12 Key Prescriptions

1. The head will plan

Lack of planning is a weakness. Studies have shown that ambiguous expectations, poorly defined goals, a lack of direction cause feelings of frustration and confusion in staff (Blase, 1987, Rutter, 1979). To counteract this the head can use planning as a form of participation and control rather than relying on rules and procedures. Thus, everybody can be involved in planning on a bottom-up basis, that is - all staff and not a favourite few.

2. The head will have a vision

He will be able to create and communicate to staff and to the consumer a view of the future and where the organisation is going. The leader makes sense of the world around him and its conflicting demands and shares this vision with his staff. Described as philosophic competence (Barrow, 1976), this is the ability 'to develop and live an enabling and empowering vision' (Peters, 1988, p. 398).

3. The head will be a problem-solver

The head will solve problems, however small, rather than defer or ignore them. He does not have to solve them himself but ensures that problems are resolved. He will always follow things through.

4. The head will be a risk-taker

The head will encourage staff to try things (Peters and Waterman, 1988). Instead of a preference for stability and a reluctance to change, he will encourage staff to see change as a continuous and normal process. Risk-taking and creativity are seen as more important than conformity and safe

behaviour. He will not blame staff if things go wrong but will support, praise and be accessible. He will reduce bureaucracy to a minimum and will not work through rules and procedures. Entrepreneurship will be fostered.

5. ***The head will be open and trusting***

He will demand total integrity both from himself and the staff (Peters, 1988). There will be a climate of openness and trust. Inevitably there will be differences of values and attitudes but conflict will be resolved by open debate, not by manipulative or Machiavellian techniques. He will diminish micro-politics and treat them as a description not a prescription (Glatter, 1981).

6. ***The head will care for his staff above all else***

Schools are small enough to make each member of staff feel important. The head makes each member of staff's welfare and development his concern. He will treat staff as his most valuable asset and make staff development a major priority.

7. ***The head will empower staff***

The head will devolve power to teams and individuals within the school. Power will be given to people nearest to the consumer. He will be looking for new structural arrangements within the school to reduce the existing emphasis on status and hierarchy, e.g. using deputies not as role-fillers but as leaders of task forces. Staff will be granted the level of autonomy they can handle. There will be only necessary centralisation of power in the hands of the head.

8. ***The head will create fair systems***

The head will not abuse power by employing favouritism, making arbitrary decisions and being inconsistent (Blase, 1987). He will set up fair systems for selection and promotion and for allocating resources for learning and staff development. He will be seen as being as fair as possible by staff.

9. ***The head will be a strong instructional leader***

Leaders in effective schools appear to be involved in discussions about the curriculum and to influence teaching approaches while allowing much of the control to be with teachers. Fullan (1982) argues that curriculum change and development is likely to occur when heads play a direct active role in

leading the process of change. This does not necessarily imply that the heads are experts in curriculum content but that they exhibit leadership in curriculum planning and implementation. The role of curriculum facilitator to ensure that the institution has clear curriculum guidelines which are transformed into effective practice appears a crucial one. "The head is the critical person for better or worse, when it comes to school (curriculum) planning." (Fullan, 1982).

10. The head will stress quality

He will set high standards and expectations. He will not accept second rate work or effort. Evaluation and appraisal will be used regularly not as a punishment but constructively as a means of quality assurance. There will be tight control of performance.

11. The head will view the customer with delight

Everything will be looked at as if through the eyes of the customer. The head will be in tune with customer needs and will create a corporate image for the school as an embodiment of this quality.

12. The head will do the difficult tasks

The head will not be involved in day to day administration. He will get a bursar or an equivalent to take over most of the financial control. He will then be released to concentrate on key management tasks.

Conclusion

This paper began by describing the major changes in the context in which heads will be operating in the 1990s. These changes present challenges for heads, while at the same time providing opportunities for heads to function more powerfully at school level. After analysing a number of models the paper concludes by offering for debate (and much against the spirit of work in the field of education management), a prescriptive model, consisting not by any means of new ideas but those ideas which can offer a basis for action by heads. The prescriptions seem idealistic, if not pious (and will have no appeal to cynics), but while tailored for schools, are not out of line with what managers in other industries are seeking - managers who already operate in a competitive, consumer-led world.

A recent report of a training programme for a major insurance company reports that the managers wanted to end inter-divisional rivalries, to stop blaming and criticising each other, to remove the tendency to resort to manipulation and

politics and the desire to over-control staff. They asked for a shared vision, getting things done without bruising other people, being entrepreneurial, using creativity and building trust and support (Allen and Nixon, 1988). A survey to find the 100 best companies in the UK talks of the best companies stripping out much of the hierarchy, working in small teams, having a positive approach to getting things done, and a very caring attitude to the workers. In the not-so-good companies, incidentally, watching your back was the most pressing business of the day.

What appears in these companies is much of what was being recommended for schools in the LP/CE model. Regretfully, the model never came to full fruition, partly because the hierarchical, status-led, role-fixed characteristics of schools refused to go away; partly because heads were fearful of trusting staff too much and treating them as mature and autonomous professionals; partly because heads felt compelled to spend time on administrative and maintenance tasks. However, we were on the right road and heads in the past 20 years have achieved some remarkable successes in managing schools against a background of public scepticism and scarce resources. The effective school literature indicates that many of the characteristics of 'good' companies have already been achieved in schools or are there for the taking. Schools have been creative and inventive; they are full of people who want to care and who want to achieve education of good quality. The new management prescription for industry is surely nearer in character to the professional model than it is to the managerial or micro-political models. The prescription combines enterprise and proactivity with concern and integrity, a sort of caring entrepreneurialism, which industry feels is the way to cope with an uncertain future.

Schools can develop in this way without too much trauma and it is devoutly hoped that schools may not be tempted to believe that increased control, tougher approaches and a clever use of micro-political tactics are the answers to consumer demands and measurements of performance. Education managers are ideally placed to achieve excellence if they ignore (unlike Local Authorities and their seduction by Corporate Management, (Housego, 1985)), the blandishments of micro-politics or the easy virtues of managerialism and instead build theories out of the distinctiveness of good practice in schools. The model of heads as enterprising or entrepreneurial professionals has considerable appeal for the competitive years ahead, with its combination of the caring values of professionals and the proactive skills of the entrepreneur. But we will require to know how heads administer the prescription in practice if we are to build theories of management for schools.

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Self Image

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